



City of Arts & Innovation

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City of Riverside Continues Preparations for El Niño Storms With New Website

Residents and business owners can find information on what to do before, during and after a storm

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – With the El Niño storm season arriving, the City of Riverside has completed a new website designed to provide residents and business owners with information on what to do before, during and after a storm.

The website -- <http://riversideca.gov/elnino/> -- outlines what El Niño is, how it is expected to affect our weather locally and how residents and business owners can prepare for potentially heavy amounts of rainfall. The website also provides locations where residents can obtain sand and sandbags, and includes information about the “Turn Around, Don’t Drown” educational effort.

“The City of Riverside is committed to helping residents and business owners prepare for El Niño-related rains,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “This website is a great tool for accessing information being shared with Riversiders on an ongoing basis as part of our comprehensive approach to preparing for El Niño.”

Preparations in the City of Riverside dating back to last summer include increased training for public safety first responders, additional outreach to homeless individuals living in the Santa Ana River bottom, adding sandbag stations around the city and pre-staging traffic control equipment that could be needed in the event of flooding.

City employees have been working overtime and weekends to clear storm drains to reduce the possibility of storm-related flooding and also have hired an outside contractor to expedite the work. City vehicles and equipment that could be used in storms have received extra care in the form of additional maintenance and repairs.

Multiple City departments – Police, Fire, Public Works, Public Utilities and others -- have met on a regular basis to analyze existing inventories of supplies and equipment and to identify additional steps that can be taken to prepare for El Niño. A report on ongoing citywide preparations is scheduled for the Jan. 12 meeting of the Riverside City Council.

With the amount of public outreach that has occurred since last summer, many Riverside residents and business owners already are prepared for El Niño, said Anthony E. Coletta Jr., Administrator of the Riverside Fire Department's Office of Emergency Management.

Anyone who has not prepared their home and property for heavy rainfall should act immediately, Coletta said. Stockpile sandbags now if your property has flooded in the past, clear your rain gutters and downspouts of any leaves or debris and be sure to have adequate food and water in your home and vehicle.

"Disaster preparedness is an ongoing and important part of keeping your family and your business safe," Coletta said. "If you have not prepared your home or business for potential El Niño-related storms, get started – today."